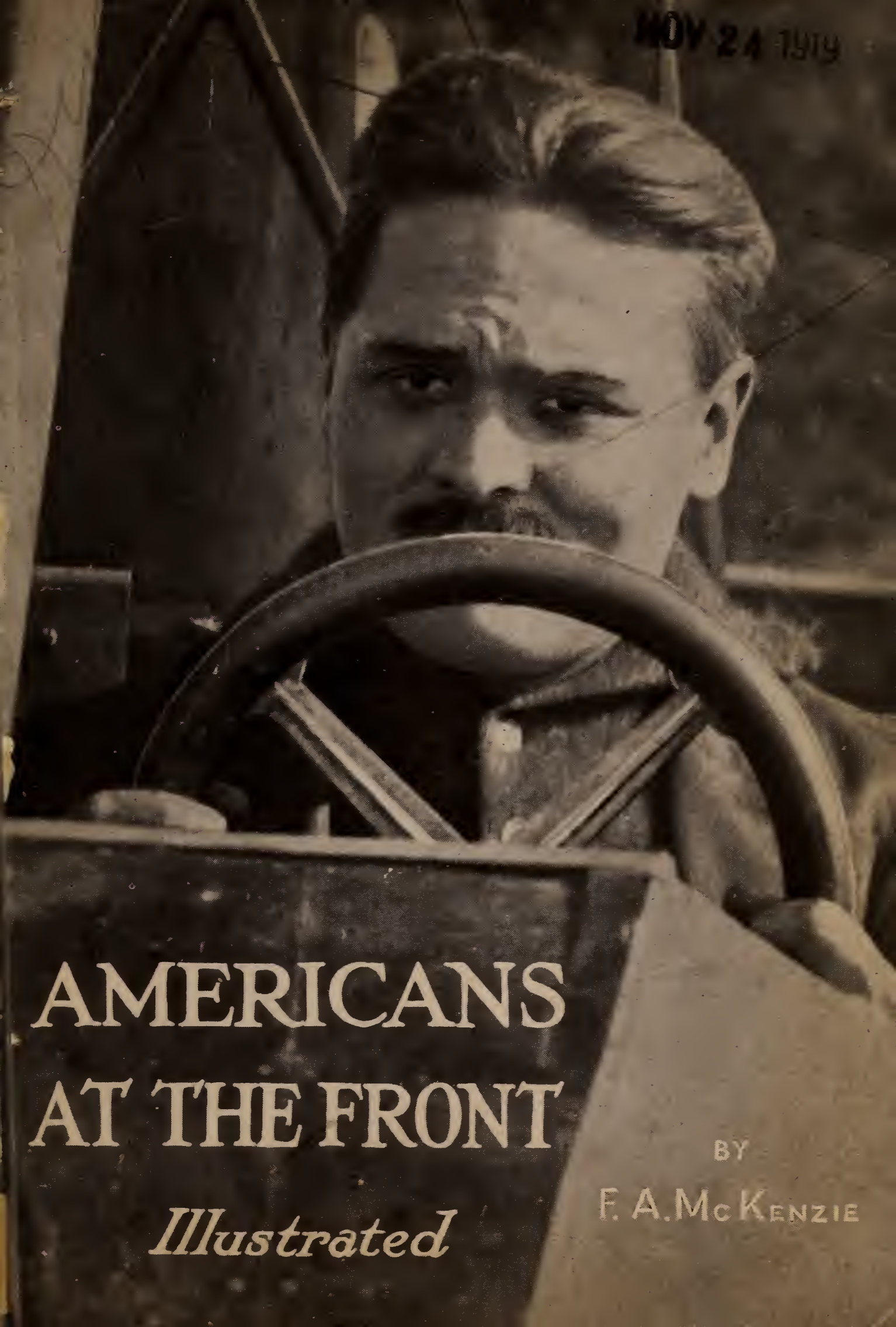


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AMERICANS AT THE FRONT

Illustrated

BY
F. A. MCKENZIE



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AMERICANS AT THE FRONT

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F. A. McKENZIE.

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Gift

“ Wir hassen die Amerikaner und alles was aus Amerika kommt.”

“ We hate the Americans and everything that comes from America.”

A German to Mr. Gustav C. Roeder, special correspondent of “The New York World” in Germany.

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The full tale of how Americans have helped the Allies cannot yet be told. But enough is known to prove that the union of hearts is still something much more than a name.

What have the Americans done? Many of them, the very pick of the nation, have given themselves as volunteers. The great Universities, headed by Harvard, have sent doctors and hospital staffs to nurse the sick and wounded. Groups of rich young men crossed the Atlantic when war broke out, bringing their own automobiles with them, and formed the nucleus of the splendid ambulance services that have been of incalculable service to France. In Belgium a group of Americans, Rhodes scholars, engineers and industrial leaders, headed by a supreme business organizer, saved a nation from starvation. In Serbia a brave American

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doctor fought almost single-handed against the brutalities of the Austrian troops when they swept over the land after the great retreat.

Americans were so eager to join the ranks of the French Army that military laws were relaxed for their benefit. The record of the American Flying Squadron in the French service is one of great brilliancy, even in that corps d'élite of France. The British roll of honour gives frequently the names of American born soldiers who have laid down their lives for the Allies.

Look at the record of Americans who have died for Britain and France. It is a very remarkable list, more especially for the quality of the men enrolled. There is Harold Chapin, born in Brooklyn, at the beginning of a brilliant career as a dramatist, and Alan Seeger, of old New England stock, whom three nations to-day hail as poet and hero. Kenneth Weeks, who died at Givenchy, twenty-four years old, had already done notable work in letters. Dilwyn Starr, of Philadelphia, a Harvard man, took his place in the ranks of the British Expeditionary Force, won his commission, and died on the Somme. Officers in the United States Army like Major Stewart and Captain Wood, on the staff of General Leonard Wood, resigned their commissions to join us, and fell for us. American students from the Latin Quarter, University

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men galore, sturdy plainsmen and men from the West, have died side by side with the sons of Britain fighting for justice and liberty. Many others, happily, are still fighting, wearing on their breasts the ribbons of the medals they have won for gallant conduct in the field.

What drew them to us? Some came because of the instinct of race and blood. "The army of my race and tongue," said Frederick Palmer, the distinguished war correspondent, when he found himself with the British Forces. Some came because of historic memories. "I am paying for Lafayette and Rochambeau," said Kiffin Rockwell, the steel-nerved airman, shortly before his death. Others were forced to join us because of what they saw of the enemy's methods of war. Among the most active American soldiers in the Allied ranks are men who began as ambulance workers or relief agents, and who were so aroused by the cruelties they witnessed that they took up the sword to fight a foe whom they recognized as the common enemy of all who love justice and freedom.

Alan Seeger, shortly before he died, gave another reason:

"Can sneerers triumph in the charge they made,
That from a war where Freedom was at stake.

America withheld and, daunted, stood aside.

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Now heaven be thanked, we gave a few brave drops;
Now heaven be thanked, a few brave drops were ours."

The Americans in the fighting ranks have only been representatives of a vastly greater mass of their countrymen supporting us in their own land. The women of the United States have banded themselves into five thousand groups and circles to raise money or prepare comforts for the Allies, mainly for the destitute in France and Belgium. A noted organization on the Rocky Mountains raised a fund of a million dollars for a new club house. It was to be the finest of its kind in the world. Then an eyewitness told the members what was happening in Belgium. They resolved to make their old club house do, and donated the million dollars as a gift for King Albert's needy subjects. There is a systematised movement throughout the elementary schools of America by which the boys and girls of each district adopt a certain number of Belgian children, and make themselves responsible for finding three cents a day for the feeding of each child.

As the Allied Armies move ahead on the Western front there come on behind a group of Californian women, who are working out plans for re-building ruined French towns and

AN APPEAL TO AMERICA

THE REGION OF
IN THE PROVINCE OF , BELGIUM,

has now Children who depend upon the Meals served in Public Schools and Infants' Kitchens. In this Region there are Communes or Towns, and your is asked to help feed the Children in the Commune of

It costs Six Cents a Day to supply each Child with one of these Meals.

The Belgian People from their own resources provide Three Cents a Day for each Child.

Cannot peaceful, happy, well-fed America find the other Three Cents?

This Six Cents furnishes every Child with two slices of bread, or two crackers, a bowl of soup, a plate of hash, and a cup of cocoa or milk.

Will you give Three Cents a Day for One Child in ?

Will your give \$ a day to Feed the Children in this Commune, which will only provide each Child for One Day with as much as you eat in One Meal?

YOU can keep them Healthy and Strong if you will keep up this Amount.

The American Commission has carried this burden for two years with the aid of contributions from the whole world.

Every Country, except America, has its own increasing load, and can no longer give so generously.

Are you going to allow the little Belgians to want for Food, because America out of its abundance fails to help them?



Enlarged from a Snapshot recently taken in Brussels.

MAP OF THE REGION OF
Showing the Commune of

A Poster displayed in American Schools.

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villages. America is aiding France to grapple the most dreaded secondary result of the war—tuberculosis. American hospitals from Devonshire to Salonica are helping to nurse the victims of war. To mention all the forms that active American aid has taken would be to transform this paper into a mere catalogue of names.

Americans are the first to say that the stream of sympathy in the United States has been barely tapped, and that from ocean to ocean; people are eager and willing to do more. “So much remains to be done,” wrote ex-President Taft recently, “so widespread and profound is the misery to be alleviated, that every agency should be utilized for the expression of the good will and brotherly love of the American people.” Greater things may yet be ahead. Some of us are glad to treasure in our hearts what has been done.

Various attempts have been made to number the Americans in the Allied ranks. Those like myself whose affairs take them into the Allied lines are constantly surprised to find Americans in the most unlikely places. Their speech betrays them, whatever declarations they may have made when joining up. “If you take a map of the United States and go up and down the American lines in France, you will find no city, great or small, which has not sent a flying

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man, a bomber, an artilleryman, a sniper or despatch rider to help to destroy Prussian despotism," wrote Lord Northcliffe, after a visit to the front. He estimated the number at over 50,000. "When I said in something I wrote lately that the American soldiers in France numbered 50,000, I rather under-estimated their strength. I made that calculation on statements supplied by French as well as by British authorities. The great fact is that more than 50,000 young Crusaders have crossed the Atlantic to join an Army in which they are fighting not for King or country, but against what they realize to be the curse of the world at this moment—the attempt of the Germans to dominate Europe and then America."

The most spectacular and thrilling side of the work of the war is found among the Army flyers.

The American squadron of the French Aviation Corps owes its existence to three young men—William Thaw, of Pittsburg, Norman Prince, of Boston, and Elliott Cowdin, the Long Island polo player. Thaw,* a well-known American flyer, volunteered his services at the outbreak of the war. At that time the solitary French corps open to non-Frenchmen was the Foreign Legion. He joined it in August, 1914, and it was only with considerable difficulty that he was

* See portrait on cover.



The late Kiffin Rockwell.

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later transferred to the aviation service. Prince and Cowdin, fresh from America, came a little later, and the way was now open for them to join the aviation corps direct. A fourth American, Bert Hall,* a Texan cowboy who had also joined the Foreign Legion, was transferred to the air service shortly after Thaw.

Air Corps are to modern armies what the King's Guards were in the days of the Stuarts and the Louis—the corps d'élite. In France, the Army airmen rank specially high, and anyone who has witnessed their marvellous work admits that they have earned their place. For foreigners to come into this picked service was a severe test. Happily the Americans were tried and experienced flyers, and their records soon made them marked men. They themselves would be the last to deny any claim to special honour. "Why write about us," demanded Kiffin Rockwell shortly before his death, "when we are doing only what our French comrades are doing every day as well as we are."

The Americans urged the idea of a separate American squadron of the French flying service. Other men were coming to join them. Soon there were six American pilots who had passed

* Since promoted Lieutenant and serving in Eastern Theatre of War.

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their tests, the two others being Didier Masson, a well-known American exhibition flyer, and James Bach, who came from the Foreign Legion. Thaw was promoted to Lieutenant, and the American escadrille came into being.

Among others who soon joined up were two more from the Foreign Legion, Kiffin Rockwell, of Atlanta, Ga., and Victor E. Chapman, of New York, son of the eminent writer, John Jay Chapman. James McConnell, born in Chicago, a graduate of the University of Virginia, and one of the staff of a small railroad in North Carolina, came from the American Ambulance Corps with a high record. He had left his railway work, to serve as an ambulance driver at the front, where he had been mentioned in orders of the day for conspicuous bravery in attending the wounded under fire, and decorated with the Croix de Guerre. Convinced that the cause of the Allies was the cause of freedom, he entered the active fighting ranks. He secured his license a month and a day after he entered the flying school, and soon earned fresh honour.

"All along," said Mr. McConnell, "I had been convinced that the United States ought to aid in the struggle against Germany. With that conviction, it was plainly up to me to do more than drive an ambulance. The more I saw the splendour of the fight the French were fighting,

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the more I began to feel like an embusqué—what the British call a 'skirker.' So I made up my mind to go into aviation."

The original six had grown by the middle of 1916, to about fifty pilots and men in training. One of the first group, Bach, was captured by the Germans when going to the rescue of a comrade, and was for a time in danger of death by court-martial as a franc-tireur. The Germans did the American aviators the honour of ranking them with the English soldiers, as objects for their special hatred. Elliot Cowdin won the Medaille Militaire before the American squadron was formed, by bringing down a German machine on the Verdun front.

The first member of the squadron to lose his life was Victor Chapman. He was a student in the Latin Quarter when the war broke out, and at once joined the Foreign Legion. Soon wounded in action, he was on recovery transferred to the air service as an aerial bomb dropper, and later qualified as pilot. Chapman was a super-man. He took every opportunity to fly straight for the enemy's country and to attack any enemy craft within reach. If there were several enemy planes together, so much the better. "He flew more than any of us," wrote one of his comrades. "Never missing an opportunity to go up, and never coming down

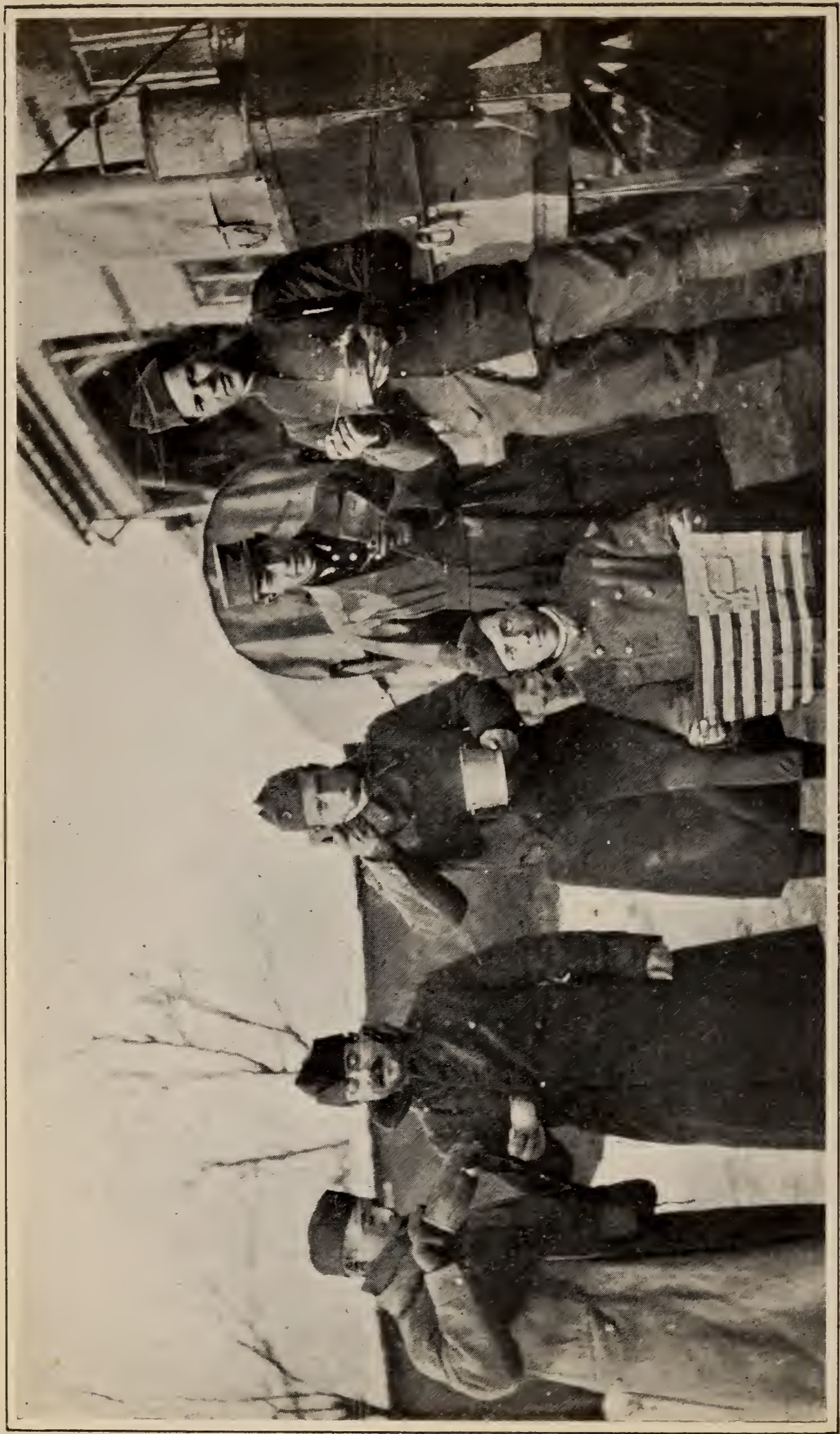
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until his gasoline was giving out. He was a sieve of patched-up bullet holes. His nerve was almost super-human, and his devotion to the cause for which he fought sublime."

Soon he had the destruction of seven German planes to his credit. On one occasion he attacked four enemy planes. One of them getting behind him, swept his machine with bullets, smashing the rod of the stability control and wounding him in the head. Chapman grasped the rod with one hand, and steered himself to safety with the other. As soon as his wound was dressed, he mounted again in a fresh plane, looking out for someone else to fight.

Chapman's death was worthy of the man. He knew that a wounded comrade in hospital wanted oranges, and he started out in his warplane with a basket of fruit for him. On the way, he saw an air fight far over the German lines. Four Germans were attacking three French. He swooped down on them, destroying one of the Germans by machine gun fire, and driving the others off. What followed is not quite clear, but apparently as he passed, the bullets of one plane caught and killed him.

The French official army order telling of his death recorded his glory. "In memory of this citizen of the United States who, inspired by sentiments of lofty idealism, gave his life for the



American Legionnaires on the Somme Front, January, 1917.

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cause of the Allies." When news was brought to his father of his death, he declared, "If Victor is killed in battle, I am resigned. I am proud that he joined the French Army, and I think that every American boy ought to do the same."

The reputation of Kiffin Rockwell equalled that of Chapman. To him this war was the war for world freedom, and France was the champion of universal liberty. "If France were conquered, I should prefer to die," he wrote. "The cause of France is the cause of all mankind." His fearlessness was famous, even in this corps of fearless men. Taking great risks, ever ready for a fight, he was twice wounded, but immediately he recovered he was back again. On September 23rd, 1916, he attacked single-handed four German aeroplanes. An explosive ball hit him, four thousand mètres high, and killed him. "More than ever I want to live," he had written shortly before, when recovering from a wound. "But not from an egotistic point of view." "This war has taught me many things. I want to live to do all the good I can. But if I must be killed in the war, I have no fear of dying, and I feel there can be no better end." "The bravest and best of us is no more," the chief of the squadrilla declared when news of his death came.

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Norman Prince, of Boston (nephew of the famous psychiatrist, Dr. Morton Prince), one of the pioneers of the squadron, and himself a brilliant flyer, was mentioned five times in despatches for conspicuous gallantry and decorated with the *Medaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*. Late in 1916, he was seriously wounded in a raid on the Mauser Rifle Factory at Oberndorf. Despite his wounds, he succeeded in flying back to French territory, where he died.

On the many decorations bestowed on the American airmen, from the Cross of the Legion of Honour for Lieutenant Thaw to other coveted decorations for his men, I do not dwell. The many deaths, many for so small a group, tell their own tale of danger and daring. Two Bostonians, Kenneth Weeks and Henry Harnsworth, died within a very short time of one another. "I want to fight, not merely to look on," said Harnsworth. "I want to fight for France, as the French once fought for us." He had his opportunity, and fought to the end. Weeks, a student in the Beaux Arts, responded to the call of France when war began. From the Foreign Legion he graduated into the air service, and from the air service to a hero's death.

The story of the American Ambulance Corps



The late Norman Prince.

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will not soon be forgotten. The two main groups are the American Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps and the American Ambulance Field Service, the latter much the larger. The American Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps owes its existence to a group of wealthy young Americans, headed by Mr. Richard Norton, who came over to France at the beginning of the war to offer their services. There were many difficulties in their way. The need of ambulances was tremendous, for the military cars then available were few, and anything but modern. For a time the Americans worked with a British group. Then for better organization the two worked separately. To-day the American Motor Ambulance Corps consists of three convoys, each of twenty-five cars. Its staff numbers about 150 Americans, all of them volunteers, most unpaid and many helping to support with their money the work they are doing. It has been in every "big push." It has been twice cited before the Corps d'Armée—a very great honour indeed; it has been repeatedly cited before Brigades; honours of every kind have been earned by its workers, and it has never failed to respond to the call for its service. A number of members of this Corps have volunteered for active service, both in the British and French Armies, and

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several of them have died in the fighting ranks. Some joined the French Flying Corps. The case of Mr. Dilwyn Starr is typical of others. The son of Dr. Starr, of Philadelphia, he was conspicuous at Harvard as an athlete, playing for four years in the University football team. At the outbreak of the war he volunteered for service with this Corps, and for several months drove an ambulance for it. In December, 1914, he enlisted as a petty officer in the Armoured Motor Car Section, R.N.A.S., and served with the Duke of Westminster's Squadron in France, taking part in the battle of Neuve Chapelle. Recommended for a commission, he was gazetted second lieutenant in May, 1915. At Gallipoli, he served with distinction as a machine gun officer in the trenches at Suyla Bay. Returning to England, he was given a commission in the Coldstream Guards, joined the Expeditionary Force in July, 1916, and was killed in the great mid-September fight on the Somme.

The work of the Ambulance gives its members full experience of actual war. "One of the posts which we served from the Somme Suippes was in front of and open to the German lines at Tahure," a report stated. "We had been frequently shelled there, but nothing serious had happened, though the hospital tents had been



One of the Wards in the American Hospital in Paris.

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torn to ribbons, and the cars had been hit." The Americans do not trouble about trifles.

The crowning experience of the Corps came at Verdun. It was sent to the Douamont sector, where the work was naturally very severe. The one road to the trenches and the poste de secours (the advanced dressing station) was entirely open to the Germans' fire, and could only be traversed at night time, when ammunition, guns and reliefs had to go up, and the wounded brought down.

Owing to the blunder of a doctor at the front, the corps was ordered to send five large ambulances in daylight to the advanced post, close to the front trenches. The Americans, knowing what was before them, started out. Immediately the cars were sighted, the Germans opened up a very heavy fire. Fortunately their range was defective, so that most got through safely. Two, however, Wendell and Hollinshead, were wounded. It was now impossible to send another car to bring them back, so two others, who had just gone through the raging fire, begged permission to return on foot, and to bring their comrades back in their own cars. The journey up to the front, exposed as they were to the shells of an alarmed and anxious enemy, may be imagined. The two wounded men refused to be helped until other wounded

at the advanced post had been aided: When darkness came, all were got back. The four Americans engaged, Wendell and Hollinshead, McCreery and Harden, were all decorated with the Croix de Guerre, on the representations of the French authorities who witnessed what they had done.

For two weeks the work at Verdun went on night and day. There was active fighting at the front, and the wounded, carried by stretcher bearers to the dressing station, must be brought along to the bigger post at Verdun. The dressing station, the Sappe de Belfort, was an underground shelter, situated partly under the roadway itself in a very exposed part and fairly close up to the German line. It could only be approached at night time in absolute darkness. Even a cigarette light would have drawn fire.

A shell struck two of the doctors they were helping, and one was killed and the other wounded. Several of the ambulance cars were hit, and one of them pretty well pounded to pieces. The journey to the poste was highly exciting. "On my first three trips," wrote Mr. Norton to his brother, "an artillery wagon with its horses and men was knocked out immediately in front of me. Night after night this went on—past the ruined and silent railway station, over

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the wooden bridge, round Dead Man's Corner, past Shell Street, and down Red Pepper Alley to the poste beyond which flashed the French guns on the hill forts and over which burst the Bosche shells day and night. By dawn we never failed to have emptied all the advanced posts and to have brought back those doctors and brancardiers who did not have to stay out during the day on twenty-four hour duty. Having got them all to Verdun, I then kept all the cars steadily at work until in two or three hours every case was out of Verdun and in the hospital. After that three or four cars stayed on all day at the Verdun post to handle the casualties which streamed into that spot, not only from our division but from all around, while the others went home for a short rest or to do the daily duty at the hospital and at the evacuation train. You can see that this kept us pretty fully occupied, but everything went well, and I can fairly say that the friends of the Corps can well be proud of the steadiness and vigour with which the men worked. Considering the fact that for many hours out of the twenty-four most of the men were under fire, it speaks well for their nerve and character that they were able to continue so long without breaking down."

There came the night when the Norton Ambulance was to be relieved by the American Field

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Amulance. The leaders of both groups went up together that the newcomers might learn the lay of the land. On the previous evening, everyone had suffered from the effects of an attack by "tear shells." On this last night, a very heavy gas attack was made. The sight was extraordinary. "Beside the gas," wrote Mr. Norton, "which was so thick that men and horses were dropping round about, the Bosches were throwing incendiary shells along the road which our cars had to follow. Houses were burning and falling in the roadway, so that all traffic up and down was stopped. There was an absolute block. The conduct of the French during this time was very striking; not one seemed to be excited, not one raised his voice. Men on foot marched steadily on, while the drivers sat calming their horses and waiting quietly for the moment when they could hasten to their destination."

The cars returned to a sorely needed rest. There were well-earned decorations waiting for them, but there was something they prized even more. The convoy was cited before the corps d'armée. This was equivalent to giving an individual the Croix de Guerre, and gave it the right to paint the Cross on its wagons. A General Order, signed by General Mangin, was published. Americans may read it with pride:—



A Gift to France: American Red Cross Motor Wagons.

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Ordre Général No. 135.

Le Général Commandant le Groupement cité à l'ordre du Corps d'Armée.

La Section Sanitaire Automobile Américaine No. 7 sous les ordres de son chef M. Norton.

A fait depuis plus de 20 mois constamment preuve de l'esprit de sacrifice le plus complet. A rendu les plus grands services à la Division à laquelle elle est attachée en assurant la relève des blessés dans les meilleurs conditions. Il n'est pas un seul de ses membres qui ne soit un modèle de sang froid et d'abnégation. Plusieurs d'entre eux ont été blessés.

The Norton Ambulance was back again at the front for the famous French advance of December 14th. Its headquarters were in Verdun, and it had posts beyond the town. The spot was a little unhealthy. On one occasion, one of their ambulances was waiting outside the post previously described the "Sappe de Belfort," when a shell struck it and made it into little better than a mass of scrap iron. The Sappe itself had its roof dented and its front door smashed. The workers had fortunately just left the car, but one of them was knocked over, bruised and shaken. "Am dead tired," wrote Norton during the heavy fighting. "Since the attack began it has been night and day for me. It is now just of 39 hours I have been on my feet."

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It was winter. Sometimes there was thin ice on the road. Mostly the whole area around Verdun was mud—mud-holes so deep that if a man fell in them, he could not hope to get out alone. When the French advanced, the re-conquered land, over which the Americans had now to work, was indescribable. Mangled bodies and broken limbs lay about, the souvenirs of many months of concentrated war. In some parts where the Ambulance workers went through their cars could not follow, for there was only a narrow strip of pathway along the morass of mud. On either side gaped the chasms, shell-made mud-holes. The Americans' work on this occasion was so valued that they were again cited before the Corps d'Armée. Up to now the Corps had two convoys. The French Government asked it to provide a third.

The American Ambulance Field Service has a fine hospital at Neuilly, with two smaller hospitals, and an extensive and admirable work at the front. Many of its men have been wounded in action; one has been killed; and many have earned high war honours. The Field Ambulance has had by the autumn of 1916 no less than eight sections of twenty-five cars each at work; it has operated in all kinds of territory, from Flanders to Alsace, and it has trans-

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ported between two and three hundred thousand wounded men. Its sections have been cited repeatedly. The hundreds of American college boys who have worked under it have given an example of splendid devotion which France will never forget.

The American Ambulance began its work at the very outset of the war, when ten Ford chassis were secured, their bodies made with packing cases, and were offered, with a service of volunteer drivers, to the French Government. From this small beginning, the Ambulance has grown to eight sections of twenty-five cars each, with a group of hospitals near Paris, of which the chief is at Neuilly, with six hundred beds. One of its hospitals at Juilly, holding two hundred men, is entirely supported by Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney. It numbers many hundred volunteers for its field service alone. With scarce an exception the men are Americans, and at least seven out of eight are from the American Universities. Harvard has sent most of the volunteers, but there are many from Yale, Princeton, Columbia and Cornell.

The American Ambulance has worked, since April, 1915, when it was definitely admitted into the firing lines, along the whole French front. Its members naturally have to operate often enough

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under heavy fire. Its organization owes much to the work of the Hon. A. Piatt Andrew, formerly Assistant Secretary of the United States Treasury, who became inspector of the Field Service in 1915. The devotion and courage of his staff have won glowing tributes of admiration and affection from many French officers. The Ministry of War, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, the Army by Corps and Divisional Orders, and by citing sections of the service and individual members, by the bestowal of many decorations, have shown appreciation. General Lebocq, in a Divisional Order, voiced the general sentiment when he wrote of one of the sections that, "composed of volunteers, friends of our country, it has constantly attracted favourable notice by the enthusiasm, the zeal and the courage of all its members, who, regardless of danger, have been employed, without respite, in rescuing our wounded, whose gratitude and affection they have won." The Belgian Army was equally appreciative of what was done for it, particularly in the fierce fighting during the German attempt to break through Dixmude, when the Ambulance, day and night, continued to remove the wounded over a heavily shelled area.

Amid the winter snows of Alsace, and in pleasant summer days in Lorraine, during the terri-

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ble months of the German attacks on Verdun, in Flanders and Champagne, wherever fighting was hardest—there Americans have been. One of them, Richard N. Hall, of Ann Arbor, Mich., was killed on service, his ambulance blown over a rough track on the Vosges Mountains by shell fire.

Americans in England have sought in many ways to prove their friendship. The most notable work has perhaps been done by the American Women's War Relief Fund, which has since the early days of the war maintained a hospital for the wounded, with 240 beds, in Mr. Paris Singer's beautiful home at Paignton. In addition, the American women are now opening a hospital for officers, with 40 beds, in London. Very many American women have volunteered to serve personally, as nurses and V.A.D.'s, at the different seats of war or in England. Others have opened their homes to the wounded and the sick.

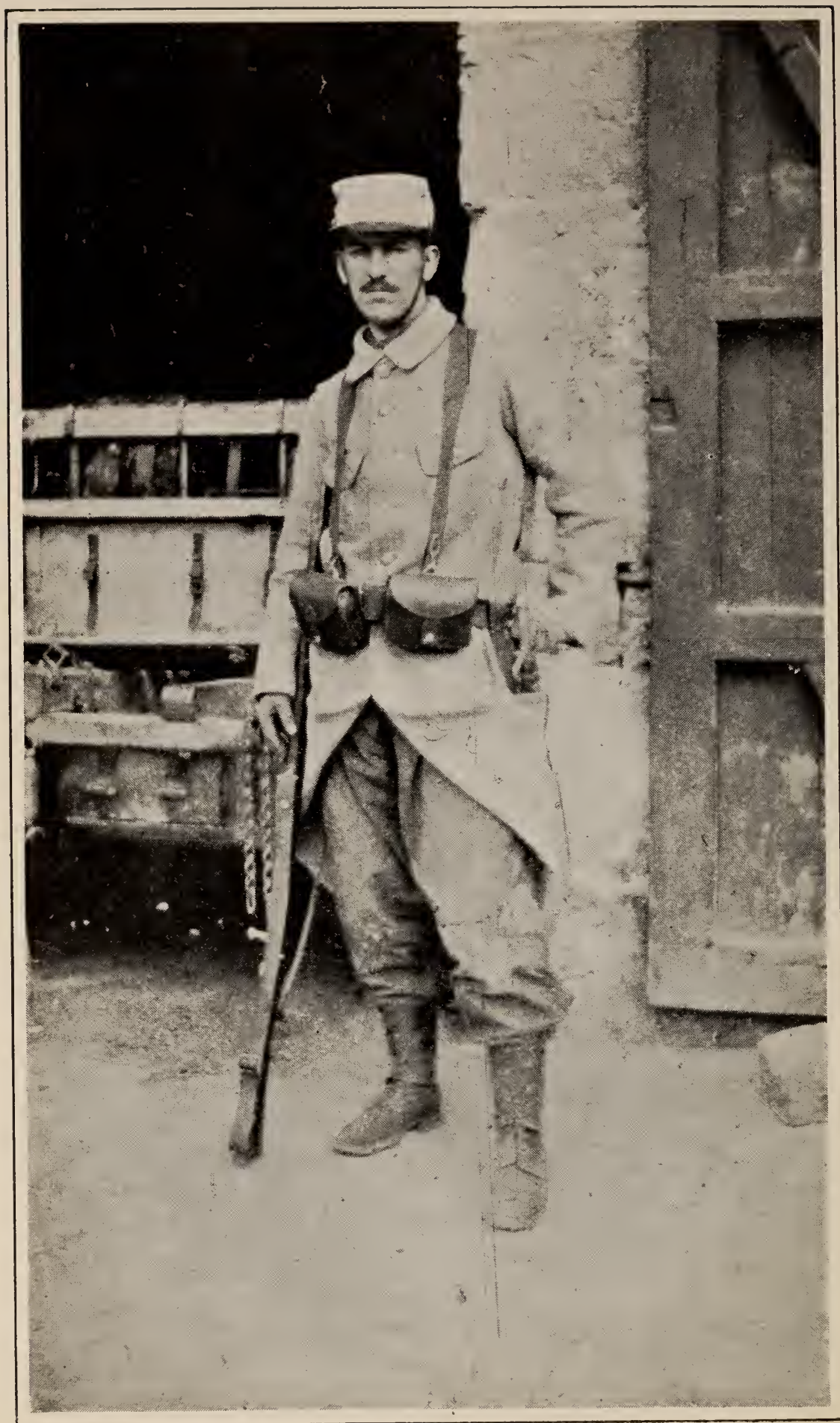
There are Americans in other branches of the French service besides the Flying Corps. At the beginning, most of the American volunteers—forty or fifty in all—went to the Foreign Legion. There was a memorable scene when hundreds of young Englishmen and Americans living in Paris marched in procession through the streets to offer themselves to France. Gradu-

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ally they were removed from the Legion to other branches. Among them was one young poet, already stepping into recognition, Alan Seeger by name. An artist by temperament, he passed from Harvard to New York, and from there to Paris, where, still a lad in the mid-twenties, he settled in the Latin Quarter, developing his poetic soul. Then came the war. The Paris of his dreams was shattered; the stark reality remained. He faced the situation, and enlisted.

“Why did you enlist?” He sought to answer the question. “I have talked with so many of the young volunteers here. Their case is little known, even by the French, yet altogether interesting and appealing.” He told how Paris had thrown her charm over them. Without renouncing their nationality, they had yet chosen to make their homes there, beyond any other city in the world. Were they not under a moral obligation to put their breasts between her and destruction?

They thought they were. The young poet found himself hard at drill, attempting to learn in six weeks what the ordinary recruit in times of peace learns in two years. Less than two months after enlistment, he and his comrades were moved up to the front. Then followed a monotonous winter of hardships of trench war-



The late Alan Seeger.

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fare and the spring and summer campaign of 1915. In the autumn they took part in the great Champagne attacks, a splendid and costly effort.

One can read in the letters of this young man that have been published with his poems,* the development of his manhood. He had broadened, deepened, and his admiration for France, ever intense, was now taking a deeper tone. He had come to actualities. In the hour of disappointment his affection for France was stronger than ever. "We failed," he wrote, after one fight. "This affair only deepened my admiration for, my loyalty to, the French. He is a better man, man for man, than the German. Anyone who had seen the charge of the Marsouins at Souain would acknowledge it. Never was anything more magnificent. I remember a captain, badly wounded in the leg, as he passed us, borne back on a litter by four German prisoners. He asked us what regiment we were, and when we told him, he cried, *Vive la Legion*, and kept repeating *Nous les avons. Nous les avons*. He was suffering, but oblivious of his wound, was still fired with the enthusiasm of the assault and all radiant with victory. What

* Poems by Alan Seeger. With an introduction by William Archer. New York: Charles Scribner and Sons.

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a contrast with the German wounded, on whose faces was nothing but terror and despair.”

Then came a long spell in the rear, which gave an opportunity to resume some of his literary activities. Back to the trenches in May, 1916, he proved his American strain by going on voluntary scouting expeditions. On one occasion he came clear up to the German barbed wire in No Man's Land and left a card with his name. “It was very thrilling work, ‘courting destruction with taunts and invitations,’ as Whitman would say.” It was arranged that he was to return to Paris on Decoration Day, May 30, to read before the statue of Lafayette and Washington an Ode in memory of the American volunteers fallen for France which he had written at the request of American residents. But his permission did not arrive in time. The days of the great advance came, and Seeger was in the first rush of the Legion that stormed the village of Belloy-en-Santerre. Six German machine-guns caught them with cruel, enfilading fire. Most of the storming party fell, Alan Seeger among them. Reinforcements followed and swept the enemy on one side. The young American cheered them on. As they left him behind the men heard him singing a marching song in English. All night long the wounded lay untended, and in the morning



A tablet erected in Belgrade to Dr. Donnelly, who died while fighting the Plague in Serbia.

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Alan Seeger was dead. "One day," wrote Mr. William Archer, the famous critic, "France will know that this unassuming soldier of the Legion,

Who, not mindful of the antique debt,
Came back the generous path of Lafayette,

was one whom even she may be proud to have reckoned among her defenders."

Little has been written about the Americans in the ranks of the British Army. It is not that the British people have not warmly appreciated the help of the American men, but there has been a desire to do nothing which should seem in any way to run counter to the American official declaration of neutrality. America is the guardian of her own honour. It is for her statesmen and not for us to decide what the nation shall do.

The majority of Americans in the British ranks have naturally enlisted in the Canadian Army. At the beginning of the war a large number of Americans resident in Canada joined the ranks, and many others crossed the frontier for the same purpose. An attempt was made on one occasion to raise an American Legion, and four special American battalions were recruited, one being sent to England. Appeals were issued, such as the following:

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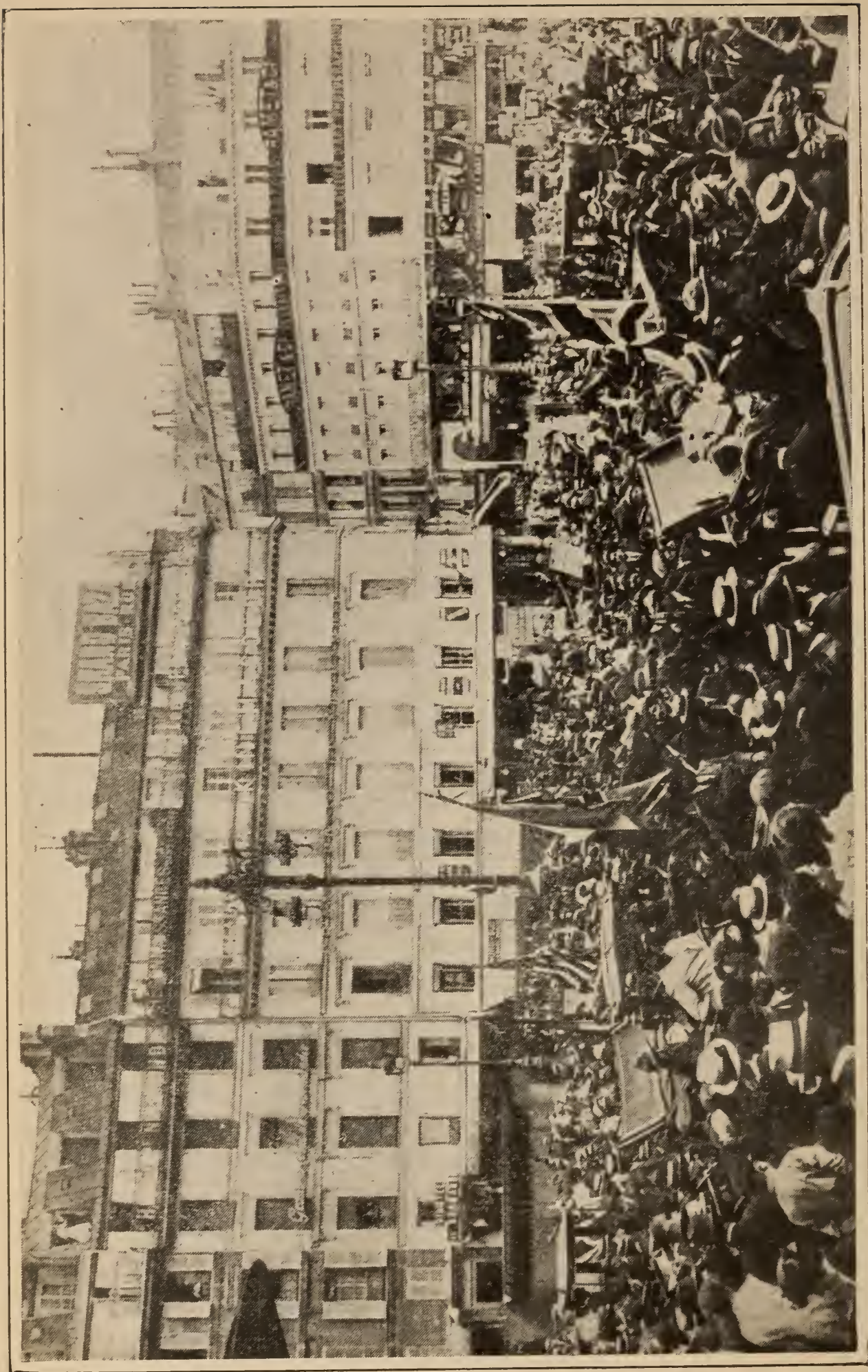
AMERICAN LEGION

IF You believe in fair play
You really love liberty
You want to fight for right
You are a real man

COME OVERSEAS WITH US.

The Legion was made up of men from every part of the United States, from West Point graduates to Texas cowboys. Most of the recruits came from New York and Michigan. It was found, however, that the separate American Legion was not satisfactory, and the battalions were broken up and scattered among others.

A good example of more spontaneous co-operation was found in the Sportsmen's Battalion of Toronto. A group of prominent athletes in that city started a fund for machine-guns for the troops. The fund grew, and it was suggested to the athletes that they should not only buy guns, but give themselves. They promptly fell in with the proposal and a battalion was raised in record time, numbering close on 150 champions and 1,200 in all, good hardy sporting men, baseball cracks, football champions, lightweight, welter-weight, middle-weight and heavy-weight boxers, lacrosse kings and the like. Now the man who sets out to divide the athletic champions and leaders of Toronto into strictly



The Outbreak of War in Paris: British and American Volunteers at St. Lazare Station, off to join the French Army.

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American and Canadian groups will have a very hard task. At any rate, when the battalion was recruited it was found that United States citizens and Canadians had freely joined up together, instinct with the common purpose of striking a blow for the right.

Among the American officers, one of the best known was Major Stewart, who, although Montreal born, had served for twelve years as an officer in the United States Cavalry. He won the affection of every man under him, and it is told how, in his last gallant charge around Maple Copse, he cheered his boys on even as he fell. Lieutenant Stanley Wood, of Kansas City, fell in the same fight. Major John Lewis, an American who had become a British subject, fell gallantly when holding a small detachment together against overwhelmingly superior forces on the Somme. Major Houghton, once of the United States Navy, heads a machine gun section and has been through many fights. Americans in the Canadian ranks have earned many Distinguished Conduct Medals, Military Crosses and Military Medals.

Lord Northcliffe, in an article which I have already quoted, has described his impressions of the American soldiers in the Canadian ranks in France. "When I saw them march back from the trenches to the tunes of 'My Country,

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'tis of Thee,' 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' and the less classical and more modern ragtime, I wondered what the small American boys, who have so often teased me on Independence Day celebrations in your country, would have thought of a factor in the war that is not sufficiently known in the United States."

"I put one question to a score of those whose mothers were not ashamed to raise them to be soldiers. I asked them why they had come. The reply of the American in France is the same every time, whether you meet him with the Canadian Army, the British Army, or the French Army. They all say words to this effect: 'The sort of thing that has been going on in Europe as the result of the horrible organised savagery of the Prussians has got to be stopped. We want to stop it before it reaches our own country. We have come over here to do it, and, thank God, we know that we are helping to do it, and that it is to be thoroughly done.'

"To which one of them added as I said good-night: 'If anyone asks you what sort of a time the Americans are having, just hand them out one good home-word: 'Bully.'"

Harold Chapin, the young American dramatist and actor, who turned, at the first call of war, from home and fame to serve England, was typical of many others of his countrymen.

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He could not act, he could not write, once war had begun. "It seemed so silly," he said. He enlisted in the R.A.M.C. as a private. In due course he became Lance-Corporal, sharing in the hard work of rescuing the wounded at the front. In the autumn of 1915 he was in the fighting around Loos.

On one occasion the Germans were counter-attacking. The Ambulance men were told that stretcher work was impossible at such a time, that it was suicide to show one's head above the parapet, the enemy fire coming from both the front and the right flank. Chapin went to report to the medical officer, intending to return to collect the wounded after dark. He was already marked for his splendid work. "I will tell you something of Chapin's fine work on the Saturday," wrote a comrade to his wife, "collecting wounded on the wire before the first captured German trench. For many hours I was out there with him; heart-breaking conditions; twenty appeals for help where one could only heed one; rain for hour after hour, and no little annoyance from cross-fire. On one journey, three of us (your husband was one) came in for a tempest of fire. Two of us lay low with the laden stretcher on the grass, while your husband volunteered to go ahead into the village, using a communication trench to bring back

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the wheels, by which we get stretchers along at a good pace over roads. Eventually the tempest ended, and the whole day ended without casualties for us."

On this latter journey back he was less fortunate. He went over a parapet to fetch in some wounded men. He was shot in the foot. He pressed on, and was then shot through the head.

In the darkest hours of Serbia's sombre history, when the doctors and nurses sent by the Allies were compelled to leave because of the Austrian conquest, the Serbian wounded had few to look to save the gallant little band of American doctors and workers.

They could not save the land from the worst of its agony. Faced by starvation, slaughter, and stark brutality, whose full horrors the world has not yet realized, they could only stand for the right like men. Dr. Donnelly, the well-known American surgeon, died when fighting plague in Serbia. A tablet stands to his memory in Belgrade. Under Austrian rule, Americans have tried hard to bring some relief to the hungry Serbian people, more particularly to the 85,000 Serbian prisoners, whose lot is pitiful beyond words.

Of men such as these what are we to say? There are times in life when language fails to convey what we think. This much, at least, is

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certain. Our memory of these men will not fade, but will be intensified as the years go on. Their deeds will help to link our kindred peoples still closer. Nations that have striven before may have to strive yet again to maintain truth, honour and justice in the world.

*Now heaven be thanked, we gave a few brave
drops;*

*Now heaven be thanked, a few brave drops were
ours.*

—THE LATE ALAN SEEGER.



“ Wir hassen die Amerikaner und alles was aus
Amerika kommt.”

“ We hate the Americans and everything that
comes from America.”

*A German to Mr. Gustav C. Roeder, special
correspondent of “The New York World” in
Germany.*